

781 Puaná stayed with us for about an hour and a half, talking most of the time about me.

787 And finally at about 5 o'clock Kuma herself came to visit me and, 791 like Hatchawa, urged me to drink of the shaman's drink. I had to drink a gourd full of it, since it was held to my lips until I finished it. She gave me messages similar to the others. Finally other Yaruros came, and the shaman eventually returned, being greeted with affection by all. We stopped when the sun rose and began another day of primitive life. We had danced and sung almost continuously for 36 hours.

606 This was my reception among the Yaruros after my return from 582 La Urbana. We talked day and night about religion, and about 604 the world in which we lived. I learned that a mother-in-law and son-in-law must never look upon each other and never talk to each other, though they must be careful to do each other service; that a man must marry his first cousin, and that socially he is under obligation to his maternal uncle who later becomes his father-in-law. Under Landaeta's tutelage the material in this report was compiled. In a sense, therefore, this is his report.

124 One day I announced to Landaeta that I would have to leave in the 123 near future, giving as a reason that my wife and child needed me at home. Actually, there were other considerations; my physical condition was becoming worse, though the sores on my feet were a little better; and for the time being I had quietly exhausted the possibilities of obtaining fresh material from my friends. After all, we had been in contact with each other for six weeks, the major portion of it living communely and conversing with the shaman continuously day after day, sometimes even from sunrise to sunrise. My daily schedule consisted of rising at sunrise, drinking a little coffee sometimes brought to me by Landaeta, and immediately plunging into discussions of religious themes. This would last up to about 10 o'clock when Landaeta would withdraw and busy himself making string or carving gourds for several hours. During this period I would seek clarification of some points from whomsoever was present, or work on social organization, or on genealogy. In the early afternoon Landaeta would be back with new material, new ideas, having thought over what he had said, what I had said, and what still needed to be said. This would continue until sundown.

521 Then there was a short intermission for dinner, but soon afterwards I was hurried over to the eastern edge of the camp, where Landaeta and his people sat after dinner, and there we would sit while the women made cigars for us, talking about mythology, religion and general philosophical concepts. These discussions would last until 10 or 11 o'clock, and often much later, and not rarely shamanistic

- 251 During the rainy season the seed of the chigua is gathered. It is crushed, toasted, and stored in small quantities in the same way as the changuango, provided, of course, that a spot is found high enough to keep it dry.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL CUSTOMS

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554 Economically the family hunting group is the basic unit, as has been shown in the previous chapter. In social matters, however, it is the moiety. Each family hunting group recognizes a headman and each moiety recognizes a chief who in all cases is the shaman. Both of these positions of authority are acquired only through personal merit. There is no inheritance of chieftainship or shamanism. If the nephew of a headman shows ability he may inherit his uncle's position, and theoretically this is the scheme. In natural practices we find that not only the Yaruros but perhaps a great many other primitive peoples are very realistic and are loath to give authority to an individual whose personality does not stand for leadership.

- 616
428 Every Yaruro is born in either the "Itciai" or "Puaná" moiety. Descent, with its social affinities, prerogatives, and obligations, being traced through the female line, the child belongs to its mother's moiety. Nothing is inherited from the father, who belongs to the other moiety, except obligations.

- 616
773 There is a legend among the Yaruros that two young men not finding any marriageable girls among their own people mated with the Jaguar and with the Snake. From these two unions are descended the two moieties. Since only among animals do brothers and sisters mate it has become a rule that two descendants of the Jaguar, "Itciai", cannot marry with each other; nor can two descendants of the Snake, "Puaná", marry with each other. They must seek a mate from the other group. Thus an "Itciai" must always marry a "Puaná", and vice versa. Cross-cousin marriage solves this problem.

- 582
604 In this system, therefore, a man's children belong to his wife's moiety, from which he is socially excluded. His sister's children, on the other hand, are socially close to him since they too inherit moiety membership from their mother which is the same as his own. Deprived of his own children to carry on his traditions, a man looks to his sister's children to take their place. It is his nephews who will help him in hunting, who will come to his defence, who will take care of him in old age. As if in payment of such attention he gives them his daughters in marriage. Thus his sisters' sons become his sons-in-law.

- 621
596 Yaruro society is built around the hunting group, which in numbers is never stable. The hunt and the gathering of food such as roots and fruits calls for a certain amount of cooperative effort, but

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604 educate and to assist him. However, his grandchildren belong to his own moiety and the children of his daughters will be born in this camp and will live with him until the boys are old enough to seek wives in the other moiety. The bonds linking these nephews, uncles, grandparents, and grandchildren are morally strong and perhaps it explains why Kuma herself is thought of as being the grandmother of Hatchawa, rather than the mother. Several myths illustrate this uncle, nephew, grandfather, and grandchild relationship. It is curious to note that occasionally the uncle in these myths plays tricks on the nephew and may even be represented as being exceedingly wicked, but the grandfather is always benevolent.

[591] The children of a man's sons are brought up in a different hunting group, since the boys will live with their wives' groups, and although these grandchildren belong to the same moiety, the old man's contact with them is rather limited. It is different with the children of his daughter.

182
582 The basis of Yaruro social organization is cross-cousin marriage. Each hunting group tends to consist of one family and other groups hunting nearby are probably closely related to it. The chance of a member of one group meeting members of a group hunting far away from his hunting grounds would be quite insignificant. It would appear, therefore, that a Yaruro man would have the option to marry his sister's, cousins, aunts, grandchildren, and grandparents. Of these it is considered incest to marry his sisters, his mother, and the sisters of his mother, whom he calls mother also, the children of his father's brothers, whom he calls father, and the children of his mother's sisters, whom he calls sister also. The only two classes of women whom he can legitimately marry are the daughters of his mother's brothers and the daughters of his father's sisters. The latter, however, belong to the same moiety as himself and are therefore excluded. His choice is restricted to the daughters of his mother's sisters.

[684]
[66] However, a number of factors may enter to allow a man a wife other than his cross cousins on his mother's side, and in fact in some cases he is forced to marry others than his cross cousins on his mother's side, who may not be available. Theoretically he may marry any of the following: His father's sisters, his father's mother's sisters, his daughters' daughters, his wife's sisters, his wife's mother's sisters, and his wife's mother's mother and her sisters. We find in actual practice that this is done. At Landaeta there was one young man married to a woman of about 40 whom we would call his aunt-in-law, that is, his wife's mother's sister.

587 This class of women whom he is allowed to marry he is also obligated to look after should their husbands die. For instance, should

- 587 any of his brothers die he falls heir to the brother's wife or wives, who may be sisters or sisters of his own wife; likewise, should his mother's brother die his wife or wives, who is one of the group of his wife's mother's sister, would also become his wife. This system can be made plainer by examining figure 24. By following the moiety relationship one can see just whom the individual is allowed to marry. If it is considered that any of these individuals may actually become his wife, either because there are no other women of his own age group available, or because they have lost their own husbands, and therefore need a protector, the system becomes clear.
- 582

IN-LAW RELATIONS

- [591] Cross-cousin marriage being the prevalent type, it means that the son of a man's sister will marry his daughter and come to live with him. As soon as that happens a number of social taboos are imposed on the in-laws. The son-in-law from the time that he marries is prohibited from speaking to his mother-in-law, although he lives with the same hunting group and may even travel in the same canoe with her; he cannot eat before her or even near her; he cannot go close to her, even though his bows and arrows may be lying there; he cannot hand her any object; he cannot make his personal toilet in front of her; he cannot sing or dance close to her; he cannot travel alone with his mother-in-law, and if they are forced to travel together in a canoe with the wife of the son-in-law as one of the party, he takes his position in the bow and the mother-in-law sits in the stern. These taboos are reciprocal. If the two meet in a path they turn aside and go in opposite directions.
- 606

These taboos are the more remarkable since there are positive duties owed one in-law to the other. The son-in-law is obligated to supply food and protection to his mother-in-law. It is his duty to prepare firewood and bring her materials which she may need to make basketry. It is expected that he will gather delicacies for her, such as honey. On the other hand, his mother-in-law will often prepare food for her son-in-law, will make pouches for him, and show him favors in other ways. But these favors must be transmitted through the wife and daughter, or through other persons. In camp I have seen mother-in-law and son-in-law sitting with backs to each other hour after hour, day after day, never exchanging a word, always averting their eyes from the other's person.

- [835] Similar taboos are practiced between the father-in-law and daughter-in-law, but because the girl lives with her parents they weigh less heavily upon her and her father-in-law, since they rarely meet. The taboos, though, are more strictly observed, probably on account of the sexual temptation.

INHERITANCE OF WIVES

583 Monogamy is the usual rule, but occasionally both polygyny and polyandry exist. If no women are available, a man may share his young wife with his brother or parallel cousin whom he calls brother also. I saw two such cases. In a tribe whose total membership may not exceed 150 such situations may easily arise.

587 The more common situation is the inheritance of wives. If a man
589 dies, his wife may be taken care of by her father, but more often by her former husband's brother. She takes her place as wife number two, especially if he is a good hunter. Other women whom a man may inherit as wives are his aunts on his father's side and even his paternal grandmother. I saw one case in which a man had inherited his daughter's child. Whether these cases represent the results of deculturation of the Yaruros in recent years, or pure necessity, it is impossible to say. It is worth noting that the taboo on marrying a member of one's moiety is strictly observed.

[66] Another relationship common among South American Indians
512 which is present among the Yaruros is the hunting friendship
605 between two men. Seldom does one meet a young Yaruro who does not have a hunting companion. Upon marriage this relationship may be weakened, though often the companionship persists. Generally the men are two parallel cousins. They show much affection toward each other, even in camp. For instance, such a pair standing with arms around each other's necks is a common sight. I have no reason to suspect any abnormal sexual relations between such couples.

124 An attempt was made to collect genealogies, but no satisfactory
• 582 results were obtained, due to the confusion that exists among the
[165] Yaruros. So many have suffered premature death, especially men, that the genealogies show a tremendous complexity. This complexity exists, of course, only for us. The Yaruro has his system, which is to guard against incest as he defines it. So long as members of the same moiety do not marry, everything else is permissible. One's cross cousin of the same, or nearly the same, age is the preferential choice, but the Yaruros cannot control birth and death, so that the preference is purely theoretical. I saw young boys married to old women and young girls married to old men. The answer was that there weren't any others to marry.

However, enough was gathered from the genealogies to verify the system as described: Members of the same moiety do not marry. Every one else can, except father and daughter, and, of course, father's brothers and daughter, whom she addresses as father anyway.

602 "sweetheart", "potential wife". At any rate, the boy learns that
 • [582] members of the former class he can not marry, and that one, a particular one of the second class, will become his wife. Thus on those who stand in the familiar relationship he cannot cast sexual thoughts.

836 Intersexual activity before marriage was not observable and it seemed as if there would be little opportunity for it. Boys and girls are kept separate, the girls staying with their mothers, the boys with the men. At night there seemed to be the same division.

854 During infancy there is no organized play for the girl. Her
 861
 [855] parents do not play as we are wont to do. She is not teased into laughter, but tender care is given to her. She is fed, cleaned, kept in the shade, and made to wear ornaments. Dolls of clay may be made for her. During this period she is taken everywhere by the mother. From babyhood she participates in the collection of food, in its preparation and cooking, in the making of basketry, pottery, making and breaking camp, traveling in canoes, but always with her mother.

868 Gradually she learns to take a more active part in the female tasks. The important point is that the proper decorum for her is to keep to members of her own sex. She does not become a tomboy. If she learns to perform tasks it is only because the women are supposed to have a smattering of them anyhow. Paddling is one of these.

854 The boy's life is first shared with his mother, and although fondled
 593 by the father, he remains with the mother until he is able to walk and paddle. Thus, whereas the girl never comes under the direct influence of her father, the boy is under the direct influence of the mother during his infancy and babyhood. Gradually he participates more and more in manly tasks, but as a matter of fact he never entirely disassociates himself from his mother. As long as he is unmarried he performs tasks for his mother and she takes care of him, performing such acts as cooking, delousing, etc. He gathers wood, lights fires, etc.

864 The children are not kept in sexual ignorance. At least the boys
 831 seem to learn something of the sexual functions at an early age. From what I observed of Yaruro camp life, it seems that no attempt was made to keep knowledge of sex and sexual functions away from the children. In the first place, there is no sense of modesty so far as the sexual parts are concerned, and therefore there is no ignorance on the part of the children. There is very little, if any, sexual play among the adults during the day. Since the attitude toward the sexual parts of the body is one of indifference there is very little that may happen which would indicate any interest in those parts. Any knowledge that the children may have of sex must, therefore, be gathered from observation of their parents.

824 Even if there were stronger interest in sex than seemed to exist, there
 831 would be little opportunity for the youngsters to indulge in any sexual
 857 relations, since their playmates tend to be parallel cousins and very often playmates are lacking altogether. In the small hunting groups often there may be only one or two unmarried young people. Under such conditions a boy would either have to seek sex relations with one of his moiety sisters or practice adultery with a woman of the opposite moiety living with his own hunting group. We may presume that neither incest nor adultery are unknown to the Yaruros. During my stay among them there was no evidence of that.

[654]

582 Another factor which tends to help the Yaruros live a strictly
 881 moral life is that upon reaching puberty both boys and girls marry if a mate is available, even though the wife or husband may be considerably older. Premarital romantic love life may be entirely absent on this account, but one suspects that another type of romanticism may be built on what is available. For instance, practically from babyhood the boy or girl knows whom he or she will marry and in waiting for the promised day one would suspect an emotional attitude is built up. It is certain that after marriage strong bonds of affection are developed between husband and wife. Strictly limited in choice, there can be no free play for one's desires.

548 In the Yaruro society prostitution is probably absent. I believe
 177 that today some degree of prostitution has been forced upon them by the peoples with whom they come in contact. Perhaps we should call it purchasing of sexual rights, with the Yaruros playing a docile if not hostile part. After all, they are forced to acquiesce in a great many practices foreign to their ideas.

831 The above is the sexual ambient. As a result the adults act in the following manner. Sexual intercourse is considered one of the numerous natural acts. It is not exaggerated, little talked or joked about, and judging from the sort of life they lead not over indulged in.

[522] Among the men, woman is not discussed. Neither virtue nor sin is the subject of comment. She is let strictly alone and uncensored. Obscenity is rare.

838 If any homosexuality exists it must be established by inference.
 572 It is common among the hunting tribes for a man to have a companion with whom he hunts, travels, and with whom he spends most of his time. Such companionship seems to be closer before marriage than after.

I have observed two boys, unmarried because no girls were available, engaged in such acts as we are accustomed to impute to love making—holding hands, etc. Yet, lest we jump at hasty conclusions, it must be said that affection between men is demonstrated much more so than

121 harvesting it, require no centralized authority and render it possible and
 182 even probable that the management of production or distribution be carried
 433 on without it. The same may be said, on the whole, for all the hunting,
 [241] fishing, and gathering harvests, a notable and probably permanent feature
 [22] of Yaruro ecology. Perhaps the only crop which has a marked seasonality is
 corn, but its absolute size in the total production, its geographical distribution
 in production, and its position relative to all other harvests renders
 [56] it insignificant as an effective promoter of managerial functions and
 formal arrangements of social stratification. It is unlikely, given Yaruro
 ecology that the forms of surplus would change; consequently their concomitants
 in social structure would remain constant.

On the basis of the formal characteristics of the ecology and of the
 surpluses one may deduce an essentially egalitarian social organization,
 [56] with minimal ranking and leadership and with dispersion of the acts of
 [462] economic distribution among a number of adult males or females any one of
 182 whom may produce a small harvest surplus at any time. With a relatively
 [582] steady and reasonably comfortable total subsistence base, and with ecological
 arrangements which are spatially repeated in identical form up
 and down river, no necessity exists for stringent rules of local exogamy
 as an institution to regulate the labor force by redistributing its members.
 One would expect frequent marrying in the village according to the convenience
 of the contractants, and out-marriages to occur either as economic
 [562] opportunity offered elsewhere or lack of women at home urged one out. The
 combined biological and productive role of women, with their particularly
 important technical roles in gathering and in food preparation, suggest
 sedentary communities and a matrifocal emphasis in the rules of residence.
 [591] However, the importance and location of the men's economic contribution
 might be expected to balance this to a degree so that one might deduce
 male uxormatrilocal residence but with other, subsidiary patterns. This
 in fact occurs, occasional male matrilocality or patrilocality¹⁸ comprising
 the subsidiary residence rules. Political authority would be vested
 [623] in the community, mainly among its elders, since little or no ranking or
 stratification is to be expected. In fact, Yaruro socio-political forms, in
 general, conform to all of these deduced conditions. They represent a model
 for any society based on the kinds of ecological conditions or form of
 ecology we have described. Where the ecology is even more restricted the
 deduced characteristics should be matched even more closely by the observed
 data. In this respect, the Siriono, for example, tend to confirm the hypothesis,
 [171] in that their partial sedentariness which revolves about horticulture
 is associated with matrifocal social organization: matrilocality and matrilineal
 cross-cousin marriage. They also possess autonomous local communities.¹⁹ The Apinayé also tend to confirm the hypothesis.²⁰

Where our analysis permits us to predict about the course of the ecological conditions, we should also be able to extend this prediction to the social structure. Since, under the given ecology, we can establish a maximum population for each Yaruro socio-cultural unit, and under the given technology we would expect no significant change in the ecology, no significant

Otomac SS14

/12 cont. /

172 budare (24), of tinaja (25), etc... which are found there are

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24. Dish to cook flat manioc cakes, in Venezuelan.

25. Jar, in Venezuelan.

Y
173 from the Otomaco women.) But they often came this way--
648 sometimes to dance or to buy canoes--to meet with the an-
648 cestors of the Yaruro of today. Like the former they were
themselves good people. Yaruro and Otomaco each spoke in
their dialect, which they mutually understood, which was not
difficult. "Today," he added, "not a person remembers it."

Y
52 Their relations must even have extended further, since
they married among themselves without any obstacle /13/
placing itself in the way. Itiai in fact approved of these unions,
as opposed to those with other Indians, the Piquero and Taparito
included, Pedro Ramón Camacho specified, or with the
Racionales, of which he disapproved.

262 They fed themselves, it appears, not only on fish, tortoise,
deer, and vegetable produce grown in the conucos, but also
on guiriguirí duck (26), a bird little in demand among the

Y
[136] 26. Venezuelan name of the
Dendrocygna autumnalis.

Y
[312] present Indians because of the fishy taste of its meat. In addi-
52 tion, like the Yaruro, they appear to have lived in round huts
323 built on the dunes, practiced a ball game, and made their
172 pottery with the same technique and not with the aid of basket-
work molds, contrary to what the remains with basketwork im-
pressions which abound in the region where they apparently
lived would lead us to suppose.

constitute incest. I believe one can show from Petrullo's own genealogies that¹¹⁴ either incest occurred, possibly as a result of the process of depopulation, or⁶¹⁴ that clan exogamy did not exist at all, since there were no clans, and the marriages concerned were not incestuous.⁸³⁵

A third important feature that Petrullo asserts existed among the Yaruro¹¹⁴ is matrilineal cross-cousin marriage. Aside from the fact that, associated with⁵⁸² the matriliney Petrullo's matriclans would possess, one would theoretically expect⁶¹⁴ patrilineal cross-cousin marriage, if preferential cross-cousin marriage existed at all, I was unable to confirm unilateral cross-cousin marriage preferences but got statements of preference for bilateral cross-cousin marriage as well as reports of bilateral cross-cousin marriage and bilateral marriages between an ego and a parallel cousin's offspring.³

A fourth important feature discussed by Petrullo is totemism. The clans are¹¹⁴ assertedly connected respectively with the snake god Poanā and the jaguar god,⁶¹⁴ Tió. Not only was I unable to confirm this, but the ethnographic evidence, on the whole, appears to contradict it directly. Totemism, for example, would be quite inconsistent with the social organization of the *ton'bo* ceremony, the central socio-religious institution of the Yaruro which I have described elsewhere (1960, 1961 *b*; cf., also, Le Besnerais, 1951, 1950 *b*, and, with Dreyfus-Roche, 1954).

Thus we have not only ethnographic disagreement among three observers,¹¹⁴ but also the theoretical improbability of the original description which attaches¹¹⁴ matrilineal clanship to hunting and gathering nomadism, and to matrilineal cross-cousin marriage. Virtually all further published anthropological material on the Yaruro has taken the Petrullo report at face value. Some of these publications include a caveat about the report, but, unfortunately, others have, explicitly or implicitly, assumed its correctness since they have used it as the starting point for historical, functional, or evolutionary reconstructions.³

Specifically the assertion is repeatedly made by Steward, Kirchhoff, and¹¹⁴ Steward and Faron that the Yaruro are one of a series of marginal tribes left¹⁷⁴ over from an earlier wave of settlement and occupying interstitial areas among more advanced peoples. Steward (1946-1950, in various passages, esp. Vol. 3, pp. 678 ff.) tries to justify the marginal classification generally by designating characteristic traits present as well as those that should be absent. The Yaruro possess a large number of the latter, including horticulture, basketry, canoes,

² The theoretical expectation of *patrilineal* cross-cousin marriage with matriliney is¹⁷⁴ discussed in Homans and Schneider (1955, especially pp. 36-37) and elsewhere. The preference for bilateral marriage with cross-cousins or with offspring of parallel cousins is also found among the Jivaro (cf. Steward and Métraux, 1948, especially p. 626). This fact, with a great many similar traits of social organization and world view shared by the two cultures, is of considerable interest to the cultural origin of the groups discussed later in the paper where other parallels are mentioned.

³ Cf. Kirchhoff, 1948, *a*; Steward, 1946-1950; Vol. 3, pp. 827-899; Vol. 3, pp. 669-679, *et passim*; Steward and Faron, 1939; Layrisse, *et al.*, 1961; Needham, 1960; Murdock, 1937.

174 and warfare as supra-tribal distribution mechanisms. It is interesting to note
182 that the cultural characteristics ascribed to each of the peoples — "warlike,"
"peaceable," "brabo" — are ecologically functional, in that they mirror value
orientations which tend to drive people to maximize the food resources in ways
appropriate to their socio-ecological environments.

174 Fourth, the evidence seems to me at present to point to the existence through-
241 out the area, of pre-hispanic horticulture, enjoyed by at least some groups within
each tribe, if not by all groups in part of every year. The evidence comes from
the reports of travellers, missionaries, and from the archeological remnants,
[m] such as they at present are. The main Spanish and Venezuelan acculturational
effects with respect to subsistence appear to have been the introduction of iron
tools; seeds and plants not of native origin, such as sugar cane and bananas;
and, here and there, cattle, pigs, or chickens.

174 Fifth, the evidence suggests a steady deculturation in an area capable of
182 maintaining a more elaborate level of culture. One may hypothesize either
that groups like the Yaruro came into the area with a level of culture reflected
by the Arauquin-style remnants and then gradually deculturated both pre-his-
panically and in post-conquest times, to their present level, or that they in-
truded into such a culture at a time when they themselves were at a more
elaborate level, and then deculturated largely under Spanish influence. It will
probably be possible to shed light on this question with the historical data.

114 In summary, if these hypotheses are correct, the entire interpretation of the
174 llanos area between the Andes and the Orinoco highlands, as well as of other
241 nearby areas assertedly inhabited by so-called marginal tribes, is quite different
from that presented by the *Handbook of South American Indians*. The mar-
ginals of northern South America seem to evanesce, and a picture of a highly
complex ecological system in which horticulture is of central importance, even
if not quantitatively predominant in this ecologically restricted area, appears.
This picture seems to conform better to the recent archeological hypotheses of
Cruxent and Rouse (1938-1939), to the historical mentions of horticulture,
to the presently scanty archeological and linguistic materials, and to more recent
ethnological data.

114 I have not, as yet, been able to make any determination whatever with
582 respect to clanship, totemism, or matricross-cousin marriage. I hope that with
614 a study of the word lists discovered and with possible older ethnographic data
that this problem may be resolved. My own field data suggests an organization
into demes with bilateral marriages between cross-cousins or between an ego
and his parallel cousin's offspring. This interpretation incidentally tallies with,
or at least does not contradict, the data, such as the genealogies, kin termi-
nology, and locality features described by Petrullo in all passages where in-
ferences and assertions as to the existence of these institutions do not occur.